

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY PM/NP:A LOCKE
APPROVED BY S/AS:AMB SMITH
AF/S:MR PETERSON (SUBS)

-----047418 090332Z /62

P 061618Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 116259

EXDIS, FOR CHARGE NELSON, CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, MNUC, PARM

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA NUCLEAR PROBLEM: SMITH VISIT

REF: A) SECTO 4099, B) SMITH-SOLE MEMCON
-- APRIL 28, 1978

1. YOU SHOULD TAKE FIRST AVAILABLE OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE
WITH BRAND FOURIE THE SUBJECT OF THE SECRETARY'S OFFER TO
HAVE AMBASSADOR SMITH COME TO SOUTH AFRICA FOR TALKS ON
NUCLEAR QUESTIONS (REF A).

2. ON QUESTION OF TIMING, YOU SHOULD REFER TO SMITH-SOLE
CONVERSATION (MEMCON BEING REPEATED TO YOU SEPTTEL) IN
WHICH SOLE OFFERED PERSONAL VIEW THAT LATTER HALF OF MAY
WOULD BE PREFERABLE FOR SAG. YOU SHOULD CONFIRM THAT
AMBASSADOR SMITH WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR TALKS DURING THAT

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PERIOD. SINCE HE IS COMMITTED TO BE IN VIENNA FOR THE
IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING JUNE 6-8, HOWEVER, HE
WOULD PREFER TO VISIT SOUTH AFRICA NEAR THE BEGINNING OF
THE PERIOD IF THIS WOULD BE CONVENIENT TO SAG. WE ASSUME
TALKS COULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN 2-3 DAYS. (FYI. SMITH
COMMITTED TO OTHER TRAVEL JUNE 12-14. END FYI.

3. ON SUBSTANCE, IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING, AND WE ASSUME THAT OF THE SAG AS WELL, THAT TALKS INVOLVING SMITH WOULD ADDRESS THE NUCLEAR ISSUES RAISED IN PRIME MINISTER VORSTER'S OCTOBER LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER. SMITH WOULD NOT BE IN A POSITION TO ENGAGE IN A SUBSTANTIVE EXCHANGE ON NON-NUCLEAR SUBJECTS. AS THE SECRETARY INDICATED TO BOTHA, WE WOULD WELCOME BROADER POLITICAL TALKS FOLLOWING SMITH'S VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA. CLEARLY, THE UTILITY OF THOSE TALKS WOULD BE ENHANCED BY PRIOR RESOLUTION OF THE NUCLEAR QUESTIONS.

4. IT IS OUR PREFERENCE THAT THERE BE AS LITTLE PUBLICITY AS POSSIBLE SURROUNDING PROSPECTIVE SMITH VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA. WE BELIEVE IT IS IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST THAT THIS EFFORT TO RESOLVE OUR NUCLEAR DIFFERENCES BE CONDUCTED AWAY FROM THE GLARE OF PUBLICITY. WE WERE PLEASED THAT THE FEBRUARY TECHNICAL TALKS COULD BE CONDUCTED IN THIS MANNER, WHICH WE BELIEVE ENHANCED THE ABILITY OF BOTH SIDES TO ENGAGE IN FRANK AND OPEN EXCHANGES. DEPENDING ON PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN TALKS, A FINAL COMMUNIQUE DESCRIBING THE SCOPE OF THE TALKS, MIGHT WELL BE APPROPRIATE; THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A COMMUNIQUE MIGHT BE ON THE AGENDA, IF THE SAG DESIRES.

5. ASSUMING SAG IS NOW PREPARED TO EXTEND AN INVITATION TO SMITH, PLEASE CONFIRM WITH FOURIE THE SAG'S UNDER-SECRET

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STANDING ON THE PRECEDING POINTS. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE THE SAG'S CONFIRMING, AT THIS TIME, WHO IT WOULD PROPOSE TO INVOLVE IN TALKS WITH SMITH.
CHRISTOPHER
SUBJECT TEL REISSUED WITH EXDIS CAPTION PER STATE 117023.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, NPT, AGREEMENTS, NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, NUCLEAR WEAPONS, VISITS, AMBASSADORS, NUCLEAR TEST SITES, NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS, NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 may 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE116259
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: A LOCKE
Enclosure: HR PER STATE 117023
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780200-0982, D780193-1127
Format: TEL
From: STATE PM
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780585/aaaacuwx.tel
Line Count: 99
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 51563aa3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 SECTO 4099
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 aug 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2769138
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH AFRICA NUCLEAR PROBLEM: SMITH VISIT
TAGS: ENRG, MNUC, PARM, SF, US, (SMITH, GERARD C)
To: CAPE TOWN PRETORIA
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/51563aa3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014